

REMARKS

Upon entry of the present amendment, claims 1-4 will remain pending in the above-identified application and stand ready for further action on the merits.

The amendments made herein to the claims do not incorporate new matter into the application as originally filed. For example, claim 1 has been amended based on disclosure at page 4, line 26 to page 5, line 19 and the embodiments presented in Figures 1-2 of the application.

Provisional Interview Request

Should the present response not place the instant case in condition for allowance, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned so that a personal interview may be scheduled at the Examiner's earliest convenience. It is believed that such an interview would help to coalesce any remaining issues existing in the case, and thereby also allow applicants to expedite further prosecution of the pending claims towards allowance. Such an interview would also help applicants better determine what issues are appropriate and/or ripe for appeal in the matter of the instant case.

Incorporation Of Earlier Remarks

The Examiner is respectfully requested to consider remarks set forth in the earlier response of February 19, 2004, especially at pages 9-17 thereof, since such remarks strongly evidence the patentability of the present claims over the cited art of record.

The Examiner is also respectfully requested to review the prior response of September 8, 2003, wherein the Applicants responded to the art rejections outstanding. Please see page 8, line 15 to page 12, line 21 of the response filed on September 8, 2003. Such remarks occurring at pages 8-12 of the prior response are incorporated herein by reference in their entirety, inasmuch as they remain appropriate to support and evidence the patentability of each of the pending claims 1-4 over the cited art of Clear et al. and Buell et al.

CONCLUSION

Based upon the amendments and remarks presented herein, the Examiner is respectfully requested to issue a Notice of Allowance clearly indicating that each of the pending claims 1-4 are allowed and patentable under the provisions of Title 35 of the United States Code.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully

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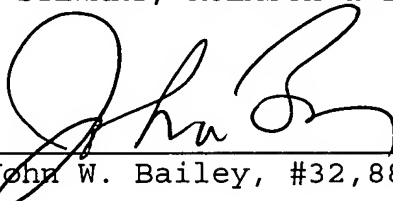
requested to contact John W. Bailey (Reg. No. 32,881) at the telephone number below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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By


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